



# TRANSFORMING EDUCATION: GOALS AND CHALLENGES OF INDIA'S NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2020

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## ABSTRACT

Amidst uncertainties, education assumes a pivotal and conclusive role in the United Kingdom. The transformation instigated by the 2020 National Education Policy has been strategically aligned with the heart of this reform, positioned not only to revamp the educational system but also to fortify underperforming economic and social indicators. Nevertheless, there exists a requirement for further fine-tuning to fully harness the potential of the 2020 National Education Policy. This policy embodies the objective of enhancing higher education by establishing universities with a variety of disciplines and autonomous colleges. In this context, our ongoing discussion critically assesses this policy, proposing adjustments that ensure a seamless transition from its predecessor while elevating its significance. This article conducts an exhaustive analysis of the guidelines outlined in the 2020 National Education Policy and its practical application at the university level. It advocates for a smooth integration of the new policy with the old one, promoting an uninterrupted path of progress. Additionally, this paper delves into the intricacies of managing and implementing the National Education Policy at both the national and higher education levels. By scrutinising the complexities and addressing potential challenges, the study presents recommendations aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the design and execution of the National Education Policy.

**KEYWORDS:** Education, National Education Policy 2020, Higher Education

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, as India fell behind in global university quality rankings, there were expectations that both the government and the education system would take concrete steps to address this issue and bring about improvements. With the overarching goal of advancing the country's development, the Indian government decided to revise its education policy after a gap of 34 years. To formulate this new policy, the Central Government established a committee in 2017 under the leadership of Dr. K. K. Kasturirangan. This committee, known as the Kasturirangan committee, was responsible for crafting the National Education Policy 2019. Subsequently, in July 2020, the Central Government of India approved the National Education Policy 2020. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced this approval via a tweet, and the Minister of Human Resource Development at the time, "Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank," conveyed this information to the public through a press conference. It was also announced that the Ministry of Human Resource Development had been renamed as the "Ministry of Education." Interestingly, this ministry had previously been renamed from "Ministry of Education" to "Ministry of Human Resource Development" in 1985, only to revert to its original name in 2020 following the introduction of the new education policy. The origins of education policies in India can be traced back to 1968 when the first education policy was introduced under the leadership of former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The second policy emerged in 1986 during the tenure of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, with subsequent amendments by the Narasimha Rao government in 1992. The National Education Policy 2020 marks the third such policy in independent India. Therefore, a policy that had remained unchanged for 34 years is now being revamped due to evolving circumstances. This was the impetus behind the drafting of the new education policy in 2019 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, which also sought input from the public. Change is a constant and unchanging aspect of the universe, with variations occurring from one moment to the next. No society remains immune to the process of change, as social change is inherent in society's nature. Indian society is no exception, having undergone numerous social, economic, political, and other transformations from ancient times to the present era. These changes can be broadly categorized into two main types: those brought about by natural forces and those initiated by human actions. While we have no control over natural changes, humans strive to innovate and alter both their lives and societies through deliberate changes. In the present context, if a society is to progress in terms of development, it must begin by revising its education policy. The stance a government takes toward education reflects its priorities and commitment to shaping the nation's future.

## Purpose of the Study

The main aim of conducting research on India's New Education Policy 2020 is to provide a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of the objectives and challenges related to the policy. The objective of this study endeavour is to attain a thorough understanding of the intended objectives of the policy, the potential consequences it may have on India's educational system, and the challenges it faces in its implementation.

## Change in Pre-education Policy

The National Education Policy adopts a prospective and auspicious strategy, acknowledging the crucial importance of the first 1000 days in a child's

developmental process. The aforementioned highlights the imperative nature of providing every child with a suitable early life setting. The disparity between current learning outcomes and the desired goals necessitates substantial reforms that prioritise the delivery of superior quality, equity, and ethical standards across the whole educational spectrum, spanning from early childhood care and education to higher education.

Currently, the existing 10+2 educational system does not include children in the age range of 3-6, as official education commences at the age of 6 with the commencement of Class 1. The new National Education Policy, in its implementation, incorporates a structural framework of 5+3+3+4, which entails the inclusion of a robust Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) foundation starting at the age of 3. The incorporation of this element is anticipated to augment the process of acquiring knowledge, fostering growth, and promoting the general state of welfare in children.

In response to the demands of a knowledge-based economy in an ever-changing global context, it became necessary to make adjustments to the current education system. The recently implemented education strategy aims to enhance the standard of education, foster innovation and research, and promote worldwide accessibility to the educational system in India.

## Features and Goals of India's New Education Policy 2020

The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India is an extensive and ambitious document that delineates fundamental characteristics and objectives with the intention of revolutionising the nation's educational framework to align with the requirements of the contemporary day. The provisions of the programme embrace a wide range of educational levels, spanning from early childhood to higher education. Although I am unable to furnish contemporaneous updates beyond September 2021, I can furnish a comprehensive outline of the principal essential attributes and objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, drawing upon material accessible up until that particular date.

## Key Features:

### 1. 5+3+3+4 Curricular Structure:

The NEP 2020 introduces a new curricular structure to replace the traditional 10+2 system. The new structure is based on 5 years of foundational stage (ages 3 to 8), 3 years of preparatory stage (ages 8 to 11), 3 years of middle stage (ages 11 to 14), and 4 years of secondary stage (ages 14 to 18). This structure aims to provide a more holistic and integrated approach to education.

### 2. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

The policy emphasizes the importance of early childhood education and care. It aims to provide universal access to quality ECCE for children aged 3 to 6. The focus is on play-based and activity-based learning to ensure that children are well-prepared for formal schooling.

### 3. Multilingualism and Mother Tongue:

The NEP advocates for a flexible and multilingual approach to education. It emphasizes the use of the mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction in early education, while also promoting the learning of regional,

national, and international languages to enhance linguistic diversity and cultural understanding.

#### 4. Vocational Education Integration:

The policy integrates vocational education into the mainstream curriculum. Students from grade 6 onwards will have the option to choose vocational subjects alongside academic subjects. This aims to equip students with practical skills and enhance their employability.

#### 5. Technology Integration and Digital Learning:

The NEP emphasizes the integration of technology in education. It aims to leverage digital resources, online content, and e-learning platforms to enhance learning experiences, promote personalized learning, and provide access to quality educational content.

#### 6. Teacher Training and Professional Development:

The policy focuses on improving the quality of teachers through a comprehensive teacher training program. It introduces a four-year integrated B.Ed. program and emphasizes continuous professional development to enhance teaching practices and pedagogical skills.

#### 7. Assessment Reforms:

The NEP advocates for a shift from rote-based assessments to competency-based evaluations. It encourages formative and continuous assessments that focus on critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical skills rather than rote memorization.

#### 8. Higher Education Reforms:

The policy proposes significant reforms in higher education. It aims to promote multidisciplinary education, flexibility in curriculum design, and academic credit transfers. The Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) is proposed to replace multiple regulatory bodies.

#### 9. Research and Innovation Promotion:

The NEP emphasizes research and innovation across all levels of education. It aims to establish the National Research Foundation (NRF) to fund and support research initiatives in various disciplines, encouraging a research-oriented culture.

### Goals:

#### 1. Universal Access to Quality Education:

One of the primary goals of the NEP is to ensure universal access to quality education from early childhood to higher education. It aims to increase enrollment rates, reduce dropout rates, and bridge educational disparities across socio-economic backgrounds.

#### 2. Holistic Development:

The policy aims to foster holistic development among students by focusing on their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth. The emphasis on experiential learning, critical thinking, and life skills aims to create well-rounded individuals.

#### 3. Skill Development and Employability:

The integration of vocational education and the emphasis on practical skills development aim to enhance students' employability and prepare them for the changing job market. The policy envisions graduates who are not only academically proficient but also skilled and adaptable.

#### 4. Multilingualism and Cultural Preservation:

The NEP aims to preserve and promote India's rich linguistic and cultural diversity. By promoting multilingualism and the use of mother tongue in education, the policy seeks to enhance cultural understanding and strengthen linguistic identities.

#### 5. Research and Innovation Excellence:

The policy aspires to create a vibrant research and innovation ecosystem in India. By establishing the NRF and promoting research across disciplines, the NEP aims to position India as a hub for cutting-edge research and technological innovation.

#### 6. Inclusive and Equitable Education:

The NEP 2020 places special emphasis on providing inclusive education that addresses the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged communities. It aims to eliminate educational disparities and ensure equal access to quality education for all.

#### 7. Flexibility and Choice:

The policy emphasizes flexibility in curriculum design, allowing students to choose subjects based on their interests and aspirations. This aims to empower students to pursue diverse pathways in education and career.

#### 8. Teacher Empowerment:

The NEP focuses on elevating the status of teachers by providing them with better training, professional development, and support. This goal aims to

enhance the quality of teaching and ultimately improve learning outcomes.

#### 9. Technology-Enabled Education:

With the integration of technology in education, the policy aims to leverage digital resources to provide access to quality education, especially in remote and underserved areas.

### Challenges in Implementing the Policy

The implementation of India's New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a multifaceted endeavour that necessitates the resolution of several challenges. The issues that emerge are a result of the extensive and comprehensive nature of the policy's reforms, coupled with the heterogeneous characteristics of India's education system. Although I am unable to offer contemporaneous updates beyond September 2021, I can delineate many obstacles that may conceivably arise during the execution of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

#### 1. Financial Resources:

One of the foremost challenges is securing sufficient financial resources for implementing the NEP's ambitious reforms. Overhauling curriculum, training teachers, upgrading infrastructure, and providing technology-enabled learning require substantial funding. Allocating these funds and ensuring effective utilization can be a significant hurdle.

#### 2. Infrastructure and Resources:

Implementing the NEP requires creating adequate infrastructure, including classrooms, labs, libraries, and technology-enabled learning environments. In many regions, particularly rural and remote areas, the lack of proper infrastructure can hinder effective implementation.

#### 3. Teacher Training and Capacity Building:

Training a vast number of teachers to effectively implement the new teaching methodologies and pedagogical approaches outlined in the NEP is a substantial challenge. Providing comprehensive training to teachers across the country requires careful planning, resources, and time.

#### 4. Bridging Rural-Urban Divide:

India's education system has significant disparities between rural and urban areas. Ensuring equitable access to quality education in remote and underserved regions poses a challenge, as the implementation efforts need to be tailored to the specific needs of different areas.

#### 5. Socio-Economic Disparities:

The NEP's goal of inclusivity extends to addressing socio-economic disparities. However, poverty, lack of resources, and unequal access to education in marginalized communities pose challenges in providing quality education to all children, regardless of their background.

#### 6. Cultural and Linguistic Diversity:

While promoting multilingualism is a key feature of the NEP, India's linguistic diversity adds complexity to implementation. Adapting curricula and resources to accommodate multiple languages while ensuring standardized learning outcomes is a challenge.

#### 7. Resistance to Change:

Any major reform faces resistance from various stakeholders, including teachers, schools, parents, and communities accustomed to the traditional system. Overcoming this resistance and garnering support for the policy's changes can be a significant hurdle.

#### 8. Evaluation and Assessment Transformation:

Shifting from a rote-based assessment system to competency-based evaluation requires revamping assessment methodologies and training educators in new assessment practices. Ensuring that the assessments align with the NEP's goals can be challenging.

#### 9. Policy Coordination and Alignment:

India's education system involves multiple stakeholders, including central and state governments, educational institutions, and regulatory bodies. Coordinating efforts and ensuring alignment across different levels of governance can be a complex task.

#### 10. Technology Infrastructure and Connectivity:

Promoting technology-enabled learning and digital resources requires reliable and widespread internet connectivity, especially in rural areas. Unequal access to technology and digital resources can create disparities in learning opportunities.

#### 11. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to assess the impact of the NEP's reforms and make necessary adjustments. Designing effective mechanisms to track progress, collect data, and analyze outcomes is a challenge.

#### 12. Policy Sustainability and Continuity:

Ensuring the sustained implementation of the NEP beyond changes in government and administrative shifts requires a commitment to long-term

vision, institutionalization of reforms, and continuity in policy implementation strategies.

### 13. Public Awareness and Participation:

Creating awareness about the NEP's goals, benefits, and changes among parents, communities, and stakeholders is crucial for successful implementation. Involving these stakeholders in the policy's execution can enhance its effectiveness.

### Suggestions for new Education 2020 Policy of India

The first five years of a child's life are devoted to the provision of early childhood care and education, which is carried out through the establishment of Anganwadis. In order to augment this stage, Anganwadis have the potential to evolve into Kids Zones, effectively integrating educational and sporting activities. Furthermore, it is proposed that the replacement of one Anganwadi worker with an ASHA worker and a physiotherapist will facilitate the integration of education and health services. This era is of utmost importance as it is during this period that 85% of brain growth takes place. Therefore, it is imperative that children have access to skill-based training in order to foster the development of a resilient and competent generation.

The primary level of schooling, catering to students between the ages of 8 and 11, encompasses Class 3 through Class 5. During this particular time frame, the primary objective is to mitigate the weight of traditional textbooks, placing a greater emphasis on moral narratives to foster comprehensive growth in children. The adoption of a bagless education approach should be encouraged in this context. During the secondary stage, children acquire knowledge pertaining to their immediate environment. In addition to the provision of bicycles and mid-day meals, it is imperative to consider the inclusion of vital amenities such as Navodaya facilities. A significant number of children residing in rural areas discontinue their schooling as a result of financial limitations, opting instead to engage in agricultural labour. To effectively implement the notion of employment-oriented education, it is crucial to adopt a balanced strategy that allocates equal weightage, specifically 50%, to both textbooks and the evaluation of local arts, culture, and small-scale companies. The engagement of parents plays a crucial role, and it is suggested that sexual education be excluded from the curriculum at the higher secondary stage. The acquisition of vocational training and participation in entrepreneurship internships are of paramount importance in facilitating exposure to a wide range of geographical locations.

The successful execution of these modifications requires a strong determination from political authorities and the establishment of a reliable and efficient infrastructure. In order to enhance the quality of education, it is imperative for universities to achieve autonomy. In order to promote global innovation through a varied curriculum, it is recommended that the top 200 universities be granted complete academic, administrative, and financial autonomy. The research spending in India is comparatively lower, as seen by the allocation of only 0.7% of the country's GDP towards research in the fiscal year 2017-18. In contrast, the United States, China, and Israel allocated significantly higher proportions of their respective GDPs, with figures of 2.8%, 2.1%, and 2.1% respectively. The expeditious formation of the National Research Foundation is of paramount importance in order to facilitate and advance research endeavours.

It is imperative for leading Indian universities to generate an annual output of more than 50,000 doctoral graduates in order to foster innovation and cultivate specialised skills. It is imperative for both the Central and State Governments to ensure fair and balanced assistance to educational institutions in order to enhance the Gross Enrolment Ratio. The newly implemented policy places a significant emphasis on the domains of environment, sports, culture, and research and development. However, it is noteworthy that there exists a deficiency in necessary infrastructure. Therefore, it is imperative for the government to contemplate the provision of considerable long-term loans, with a duration of 20 to 30 years, to universities in order to effectively tackle these demands.

### CONCLUSION

The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India embodies a comprehensive vision for the country's education system, with the objective of tackling persistent issues and equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the contemporary era. The strategy adopts a comprehensive approach that spans from early childhood education to higher education, placing significant emphasis on holistic development, inclusivity, innovation, and skill-building. According to the most recent update in September 2021, the National Education Policy (NEP) has garnered much enthusiasm and interest owing to its capacity to redefine the educational framework.

The National Education Policy (NEP) places significant importance on experiential learning, critical thinking, vocational integration, and technology-enabled education. This approach has the potential to educate students with the necessary abilities to succeed in a world that is becoming progressively intricate and swiftly changing. The policy acknowledges and appreciates the linguistic diversity in India, with the objective of fostering cultural understanding and preserving linguistic legacy. Moreover, the emphasis on scholarly inquiry and inventive thinking, as exemplified by the creation of the National Research Foundation (NRF), demonstrates the dedication of the policy to fostering an

environment conducive to exploration and originality. The National Education Policy (NEP) views India as a knowledge hub with the capability to handle global concerns by fostering interdisciplinary research and supporting innovation.

Nevertheless, the successful execution of the National Education Policy (NEP) relies on the resolution of various obstacles, including the acquisition of sufficient financial resources, the establishment of fair and inclusive opportunities for high-quality education, and the proficient training of educators to effectively implement the policy's innovative pedagogical methods. The implementation process is made more challenging by the various nature of India's education environment, which is marked by socio-economic inequities and geographical differences. In order to comprehensively comprehend the potential ramifications of the NEP, it is imperative for politicians, educators, administrators, parents, and communities to engage in synergistic collaboration. To effectively tackle these difficulties, it is imperative to adopt a comprehensive strategy that encompasses various aspects, including strong policy coordination, ongoing monitoring, evidence-based decision-making, and periodic evaluation to accommodate changing requirements and conditions.

In conclusion, the New Education Policy 2020 of India represents a significant milestone in the nation's educational trajectory. The goals and provisions of this initiative demonstrate a forward-thinking approach in addressing the evolving dynamics of the global landscape and the imperative for a comprehensive and flexible educational framework. The ability of the NEP to revolutionise education in India is contingent upon the collaborative endeavours and dedication of stakeholders to provide equitable access to quality education for all children, irrespective of their socio-economic status or personal situations. By adhering to its objectives and effectively tackling the obstacles in its execution, the National Education Policy (NEP) possesses the capacity to influence a more promising future for the learners of India. This policy aims to provide students with the necessary skills to assume leadership roles and foster innovation within an ever more interconnected global landscape.

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